

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of claims:

1. (currently amended) An isolated nucleic acid molecule consisting ~~essentially~~ of a polynucleotide having a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of:

- (a) the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1;
- (b) a nucleotide sequence encoding the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO. 2; and
- (c) a nucleic acid sequence that is complementary to the nucleic acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1.

2-3. (canceled)

² ~~4.~~ (original) An expression vector comprising a nucleic acid molecule of claim 1 and control elements for expression of the nucleic acid molecule in a suitable host cell.

³ ~~5.~~ (original) A host cell comprising the expression vector of claim ² ~~4~~.

6. (withdrawn) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier and, as an active ingredient, an expression vector comprising a nucleic acid molecule comprising a nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID. No: 1 and a control element for the expression of said nucleic acid molecule in a host cell within a treated individual.

7. (withdrawn) A method for treatment of a disease in an individual, which disease can be ameliorated or cured by raising the level of the vascular endothelial growth factor variant (VEGFV) product, comprising administering to the individual a pharmaceutical composition of claim 6.

8. (withdrawn) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier and as an active ingredient an expression vector comprising a nucleic acid molecule comprising a nucleotide sequence that is complementary to the sequence of SEQ ID. No: 1 and a control element for expression of said nucleic acid molecule in a host cell of a treated individual.

9. (withdrawn) A method for treatment of a disease in an individual, which disease can be ameliorated or cured by decreasing the level of Vascular Endothelial Growth Factor Variant protein, comprising administering to the individual a pharmaceutical composition of claim 8.

Sub > 10. (withdrawn) A method for detecting a Vascular Endothelial Growth Factor Variant nucleic acid sequence in a biological sample, comprising the steps of:

- (i) contacting a probe nucleic acid comprising a nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID. NO: 1, or a portion thereof, or a sequence complementary thereto, or a portion of said complementary sequence, with the biological sample and applying conditions such that said probe nucleic acid will hybridize to complementary nucleic acids if present in said sample; and
- (ii) detecting a hybridization complex.

7 11. (withdrawn) The method according to claim ⁶10, wherein said biological sample includes mRNA transcripts.

8 12. (withdrawn) The method according to claim ⁶10, where the probe nucleic acid sequence is immobilized.

13. (original) An isolated polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of:

- (a) the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2;
- (b) a portion of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2 and having at least ten amino acids; and
- (c) an amino acid sequence that is a modified sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2 in which one or more of the amino acid residues of SEQ ID NO: 2 has been added, deleted, replaced or

chemically modified such that a polypeptide having said modified sequence has substantially the same biological activity as a polypeptide having the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2.

14-16. (canceled)

17. (withdrawn) A purified antibody that binds specifically to a polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2.

4 ~~18.~~ (previously presented) An expression vector comprising an isolated nucleic acid molecule of claim 1 that comprises a nucleotide sequence encoding the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID No: 2 or a nucleotide sequence that is complementary to a nucleic acid sequence encoding the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID No: 2; and control elements for expression of the nucleic acid molecule in a suitable host cell.

5 ~~19.~~ (original) A host cell comprising the expression vector of claim ⁴~~18~~.

20. (withdrawn) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier and, as an active ingredient, an agent selected from the group consisting of:

- (a) an expression vector comprising a nucleic acid molecule coding for the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2 and a control element for the expression of said nucleic acid molecule in a host cell within a treated individual;
- (b) a polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2;
- (c) a polypeptide comprising a portion of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2 having at least ten amino acids; and
- (d) a polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence that is a modified sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2 in which one or more of the amino acid residues of SEQ ID NO: 2 has been added, deleted, replaced or chemically modified such that said modified sequence has

substantially the same biological activity as a polypeptide having the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2.

21. (withdrawn) A method for treatment of a disease in an individual, which disease can be ameliorated or cured by raising the level of a Vascular Endothelial Growth Factor Variant protein, comprising administering to the individual a pharmaceutical composition of claim 20.

22. (withdrawn) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier and as an active ingredient an agent being one of:

- (a) an expression vector comprising a nucleic acid molecule comprising a nucleotide sequence that is complementary to a nucleotide sequence encoding the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2 and a control element for expression of said nucleic acid molecule in a host cell of a treated individual; or
- (b) an antibody that binds specifically to a polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2.

23. (withdrawn) A method for treatment of a disease in an individual, which disease can be ameliorated or cured by decreasing the level of a Vascular Endothelial Growth Factor Variant protein, comprising administering to the individual a pharmaceutical composition of claim 22.

24. (withdrawn) A method for detecting a Vascular Endothelial Growth Factor Variant nucleic acid sequence in a biological sample, comprising:

- (a) contacting a probe nucleic acid comprising a nucleotide sequence encoding the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2 or a sequence complementary thereto with the biological sample and applying conditions such that said probe nucleic acid will hybridize to complementary nucleic acids if present in said sample; and
- (b) detecting a hybridization complex.

25. (withdrawn) A method according to claim 24, wherein said biological sample comprises mRNA transcripts.

26. (withdrawn) A method according to claim 24, wherein the probe nucleic acid is immobilized.

27. (withdrawn) A method for identifying a candidate compound that specifically binds to a Vascular Endothelial Growth Factor Variant protein and modulates the activity of a Vascular Endothelial Growth Factor Variant protein comprising:

- (a) providing a polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2;
- (b) contacting the candidate compound with said polypeptide;
- (c) determining the effect the candidate compound on the biological activity of said polypeptide and selecting as a candidate a compound that affects said biological activity.

28. (withdrawn) A method according to claim 45, wherein the compound is an activator and the measured effect is an increase in the biological activity.

29. (withdrawn) A method according to claim 45, wherein the compound is an inhibitor and the effect is a decrease in the biological activity.

30. (withdrawn) A method for detecting a Vascular Endothelial Growth Factor Variant protein in a biological sample, comprising:

- (a) contacting an antibody that specifically binds to an epitope presented by a polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2 with the biological sample and applying conditions permitting the formation of an antibody-antigen complex; and
- (b) detecting an antibody-antigen complex.

31-32. (canceled)